

RECORD OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON **THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2016** AT 6:00 PM IN THE JAMES F. WALSH SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROOM, 5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, TOWN HALL. STATUTORY NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK.

School Committee Members Present: Ms. Ditkoff (Chairman), Mr. Chang, Ms. Charlupski, Mr. Glover, Dr. Jackson, Mr. Pollak, and Ms. Stram (by phone). School Committee Members Absent: Ms. Scotto (Vice Chairman) and Ms. Stone. Also present: Dr. Connelly, Dr. Fischer-Mueller, Dr. Shmukler, Ms. Dunn, Mr. Lummis, Mr. Kahn, and Ms. Coyne.

**1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

**a. Calendar**

Ms. Ditkoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She announced that Ms. Stram will be participating remotely, by phone, because she has determined that geographic distance makes Ms. Stram's physical attendance unreasonably difficult. Ms. Ditkoff noted upcoming events on the calendar.

**b. Consent Agenda**

**ACTION 16-16**

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Mr. Glover, the School Committee VOTED, by roll call, (Dr. Jackson abstained because she was not at the March 22, 2016 School Committee Workshop) to approve the items included in the Consent Agenda.

- i. Past Record: March 17, 2016 School Committee Meeting
- ii. Past Record: March 22, 2016 School Committee Workshop
- iii. Acceptance of a \$500 Donation from the Korean Church of Boston to the Brookline High School General Scholarship Fund (Attachment A)
- iv. Acceptance of a \$1,000 Donation from the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals' Association, Inc. (Attachment B)
- v. Out-of-State Student Trip: Brookline High School Varsity Baseball Team to Cooperstown, New York; May 13, 2016 to May 15, 2016 (Attachment C)
- vi. Out-of-State Student Trip: Brookline High School Amnesty International Chapter to Washington, D.C.; June 20, 2016 to June 22, 2016 (Attachment D)
- vii. Out-of-State Student Trip: Brookline High School Model United Nations Club to Providence, Rhode Island; November 11, 2016 to November 13, 2016 (Attachment E)
- viii. Out-of-State Student Trip: Brookline High School Model United Nations Club to New Brunswick, New Jersey; December 1, 2016 to December 4, 2016 (Attachment F)

**2. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION**

**a. Proposed Vote on FY 2017 Budget (assumes no funds for School Choice)**

Mr. Stram and Deputy Superintendent for Administration and Finance Mary Ellen Dunn presented the FY 2017 Budget votes (Attachment G). The Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend the proposed budget to Town Meeting.

**ACTION 16-17**

On a motion of Ms. Stram and seconded by Mr. Chang, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, by roll call, to approve the transfer of \$41,581 from the Town/School Partnership allocation for the school department to the Public Buildings Division for the purposes of hiring a Craftsman/Tradesman.

**ACTION 16-18**

On a motion of Ms. Stram and seconded by Mr. Chang, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, by roll call, to approve the budget request to Town Meeting of \$101,058,795 for fiscal year 2017.

**ACTION 16-19**

On a motion of Ms. Stram and seconded by Mr. Chang, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, by roll call, to approve the use of \$3,577,761 in special revenue fund revenues, as outlined in the FY 2017 budget document.

**3. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION**

**a. Proposed Vote to Approve a Contract with Incoming Superintendent of Schools Andrew Bott**

Ms. Charlupski explained the terms of the proposed contract (Attachment H).

**ACTION 16-20**

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Mr. Glover, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, by roll call, to approve an employment agreement by and between the Brookline School Committee and incoming Superintendent of Schools Andrew Bott for the period July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019, as shown in Attachment H.

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS**

**a. Finance**

Ms. Stram stated that the next meeting of the Finance Subcommittee will take place on April 25, 2016. The agenda will include the FY 2017 Budget, the FY 2016 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financial Report, and Proposed FY 2016 Budget Transfers.

**b. Capital Improvements**

Mr. Pollak reported that the Capital Improvements Subcommittee met on April 8, 2016. The Subcommittee discussed the 9<sup>th</sup> School Site Search Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and other work related to site determination. The five proposals will be reviewed by the Committee of 7. The aspirational schedule is to complete the site studies this

summer in time for a decision on a site in the fall; hire an architect to do a feasibility study in the winter and early spring; complete feasibility with a cost study in time to present a funding request to the 2017 Annual Town Meeting; complete schematic design over the summer and fall; seek funding through Town Meeting and an override (November 2017 at the earliest; could slip to the 2018 Annual Town Meeting). The high school project would be on a substantially similar schedule. There was consensus that we should establish School Building Committees for the 9<sup>th</sup> School and Brookline High School projects, with membership similar to what is required with Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) participation. Dr. Connelly, in consultation with School and Building staff, will provide recommendations for a framework. The Subcommittee also had an update on Brookline High School expansion planning. A small working group has been consulting with SMMA to better understand the SMMA report and to develop a program document that could be included in the RFQ. There will be a faculty meeting on May 5, 2016 to get feedback from staff and then a community presentation in late May or early June.

The Subcommittee also discussed 111 Cypress Street, which is currently leased for medical offices. Some have suggested that the town should pursue acquiring this property for Brookline High School (BHS) expansion. Subcommittee members felt that the School Committee should vote on a statement that explains our position on this site.

Mr. Pollak moved and Dr. Jackson seconded that the School Committee approve the following statement:

*The School Committee affirms its commitment to a planning process for major capital projects including the BHS Expansion that is careful, deliberate, and that evaluates a broad range of options prior to committing to any particular solution. The School Committee recognizes the potential of the 111 Cypress Street property for possible use as part of the expansion of BHS but cannot endorse its use at this time as we start the project feasibility study that will be conducted over the upcoming year. The School Committee encourages the Town to proceed with its own investigation and evaluation of the 111 Cypress Street property to determine whether acquisition makes sense in relation to the Town's broad range of policy concerns, and as a potential strategic asset to meet the Town's current and future space needs should the Feasibility Study for the BHS Expansion not identify this property as the best option for the Public Schools of Brookline.*

The Committee discussed whether it is necessary to vote this statement at this time. Mr. Pollak stated that the town and schools both have space needs. Some might feel that there is need to act expeditiously before the property is sold to someone else. That said the schools cannot commit to be the user for the property until we have done the correct planning for high school expansion. Mr. Glover asked whether it is necessary to vote this statement given that we have not made any commitment and have not been asked to take a vote. The vote sends a message that we disfavor the site. We can make our thoughts known without taking an official vote. Ms. Charlupski agreed with Mr.

Glover and noted that Ms. Ditkoff has stated publicly a number of times that the schools would need to engage in a thoughtful study before committing to any site. Ms. Ditkoff, Mr. Chang, and Dr. Jackson supported voting on a statement to go on record and clarify our position. Ms. Stram agreed that we need to plan before selecting a site, but agreed with Mr. Glover that it is not necessary to vote on this statement at this time. Given that there was not unanimous agreement on the need to vote on a statement and that the sense of the Committee on this matter would be reflected in the Record, Mr. Pollak withdrew his motion.

Mr. Pollak reported that he and Ms. Charlupski attended the April 12, 2016 Building Commission meeting. The Devotion project early bid package (represents 25% of the total project) is out to bid, with a May 18, 2016 bid opening date. If it is in line with cost estimates and properly reviewed by Town counsel, it will be presented as a change order. The Building Commission has tentatively scheduled a special meeting on June 7, 2016 to consider the request. The Building Department has requested that the School Committee also tentatively schedule a meeting on that date. Construction will begin as soon as school ends. Mr. Pollak noted that the Advisory Committee reviewed the proposed Capital Improvements Program and voted unanimously to recommend the FY 2017 proposed funding for school projects. This includes funding to do plumbing work at Old Lincoln School and \$800,000 for feasibility for the 9<sup>th</sup> school and Brookline High School projects. The next meeting of the Capital Improvements Subcommittee will take place on May 13, 2016.

**c. Curriculum**

Ms. Charlupski reported that the Curriculum Subcommittee met on April 13, 2016 to hear an update on the Brookline Early Education Program. Ms. Milstein will present a report to the full School Committee in the fall. The Curriculum Subcommittee met this afternoon to review the School Improvement Plan for the Lawrence School. The next meeting of the Curriculum Subcommittee will take place on April 28, 2016. The agenda will include review of the Devotion School Improvement Plan.

**d. Government Relations**

There was nothing to report at this time.

**e. Policy Review**

**i. Proposed Changes to the Public Schools of Brookline Physical Restraint Policy-Section E2b (1<sup>st</sup> Reading)**

Dr. Jackson explained the proposed changes to the Public Schools of Brookline Physical Restraint Policy (Attachment I). The School Committee approved an Interim Policy on December 17, 2015 with the understanding that the Subcommittee would come back after a deeper review of the use of prone restraint. The Subcommittee discussed this issue and is recommending that prone restraint be removed as an option. The proposed policy was posted for public comment and the Subcommittee received feedback (emailed and in person at the April 14, 2016 Subcommittee meeting) on the parent notification process. The Subcommittee subsequently amended the language to require that parents

be notified of use of restraint as soon as reasonably possible, but not to exceed 24 hours. The revised policy will be circulated before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading/Vote on April 28, 2016. The Subcommittee also recommended that “or designee” be added after references to the school principal. The Subcommittee discussed the need to ensure that non-school personnel such as police officers are aware of our policies and practices. Other districts have also voted to prohibit prone restraint.

**ii. Proposed New Public Schools of Brookline Earned Sick Time Policy for Less than Half-time, Temporary, and Certified Seasonal Employees (1<sup>st</sup> Reading)**

Dr. Jackson explained the proposed new Public Schools of Brookline Earned Sick Time Policy for less than half-time, temporary, and certified seasonal employees (Attachment J). Last fall the School Committee considered and voted not to support a Town Meeting Warrant Article to accept the provisions of Section 148C of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Earned Sick Time Law, with the understanding that the School Committee would pass a new policy that would exempt certain positions from this coverage. The proposed policy states, in part, that “Effective July 1, 2016, beginning immediately upon hire, non-union part-time employees who work less than 18.75 hours/week, certified seasonal and temporary employees shall earn one hour of paid sick leave for every thirty hours of time actually worked and shall be eligible to use earned sick time ninety days after their first date of actual work, should a qualifying need arise. This policy does not apply to student interns, co-op students, per diem substitutes (except that long-term substitutes shall be covered by this policy) and individuals receiving a stipend.”

The Subcommittee had public participation at the April 14, 2016 meeting, primarily to clarify which positions are covered by the proposed policy. The Subcommittee recommended that the proposed policy be amended to clarify the wording on break in service and when sick time begins to accrue. The Subcommittee voted to recommend 1) that the School Committee adopt the policy as amended and 2) that the School Committee vote to recommend that Town Meeting take no action on Town Meeting Warrant Article 14. School Committee members suggested clarifying the wording of the first paragraph. The School Committee will be asked on April 28, 2016 to vote on the proposed policy and to take a position on Warrant Article 14.

The next meeting of the Subcommittee will take place on May 12, 2016. The agenda will include review of financial policies (Meal Charge, Student Fees, Fines and Charges, and Financial Assistance).

**f. Additional Liaisons and Updates**

There was nothing to report at this time.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Several members of the public (Josh Abrams, Nicole Konstantinakos, Ethan Treistman, Sarah Luchansky, Genevieve Preer, and Barbara Moran) spoke to encourage the School

Committee to resolve negotiations with the Brookline Educators Union. Comments included: want better clarity and transparency on how state mandates and financial incentives for data negatively impact teaching time and on what is driving these choices; we entrust our children to the teachers and are grateful for their ability to understand and address our children's needs; the paraprofessionals play such an important role and should receive a living wage; hope that the School Committee will listen to the teachers and involve them in the process; dismayed to read a letter that indicated that the teachers' actions won't change the nature and status of negotiations; hope that parents' increased participation will have an effect; urge the School Committee to reconsider and support instituting a Workload Oversight Committee; Brookline parents want teachers to be involved in the development of curriculum and instruction; teachers feel that they are being treated unfairly and this has short-term consequences (e.g., lack of artwork on the walls) and long-term impacts (e.g., teacher retention); resolve the contract as quickly as possible; is an injustice that the teachers have gone this long without a contract; every day the teachers give their best to our kids; honor and reward their dedication; support our dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals who are increasingly demoralized; we want the teachers to be happy so that kids are happy; find way to work with teachers.

Jessica Wender-Shubow, President of Brookline Educators Union, made the following statement:

*The BEU believes that key information is missing from the school district budget – and from summaries of it--and that the community deserves to have this information. Furthermore, teachers, too, are entitled to the missing information because we believe that the School Committee hasn't been fully candid with us. They have told us that every penny from the Override has been carefully allotted in accordance with promises made to the voters, so there is no flexibility when it comes to budgeting. We have called for remedies to a crushing workload crisis that we believe is damaging learning and teaching and that is taking the eye of educators off of a first priority: creating safe classrooms for our student body that is reflective of the inclusion model. We think there are signs in this budget of a ramping up of a top-down central bureaucracy that is bent on making teachers do more data collection, data entry, and standardized teaching than they are doing now. Voters are entitled to ask whether there are savings to be found in both time and money that could increase support for the kind of education they sought, and expected, when they voted for the Override. Let's let the community make their own judgment as to whether promises are being kept. The School Committee boasts that only 10% of the budget goes to central administration, but what about the question of how the central administration is using their time, teachers' time and students' time? The budget notes that money for a "newly forming department," the Office of Strategy and Performance, has been placed in the educational technology budget awaiting a new Technology Plan that does not now exist. Voters were promised that educational technology would be used to enrich students' use computers for learning and to make that experience equitable across buildings. We want to see a Technology Plan. The budget document says that at some later date in FY 2017, the School Committee will decide how moneys will be allocated to educational technology and this "newly forming*

*department.” We are told that this key part of district restructuring will be focused on “the creation of new student data and staff data” to “drive continuous improvement in learning, achievement, instruction, and operations.” The community has a right to know more about this plan now. We want to know how much override money and other district funds will be diverted to increasing the number of assessments and standardized tests that involve pulling children away from their peers, and teachers from their classrooms. Parents understand that we cannot afford to spend money and time on more and more one-size-fits-all paperwork that distracts teachers from discovering and fostering the unique talents and needs of each of their students. We believe that the amount of data that is increasing uniformity in teaching is already damaging teachers’ ability to create and nurture a cohesive and joyful sense of community in the classroom. It is way too late to repair the damage done by this School Committee’s failure to catch up with the growing enrollment that seems to have been hiding in plain sight from them for the last decade. But since they are failing to meet the emergency staffing needs of our buildings in spite of the current hiring, the teachers of this town now expect that they will make it possible for them to put the immediate needs of our students first. That means carefully considering what the priorities are for funding and the use of teacher time. We think they should publicly release exactly what the allocation of funds, and the workload plans, are for this restructuring of the district that they say they will figure out later.*

**6. INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Connelly provided the following report:

**1. Superintendent’s Open Forums**

*During the past two weeks we have conducted Open Forums at Devotion, Baker, Driscoll, Heath and the High School, and also held two public Budget Forums. Most have been very well attended with the planned agenda and accompanying PowerPoint presentation generating much interest and productive two-way dialogue. The remaining seven Open Forums are scheduled for the following dates and times:*

<i>Runkle School</i>	<i>Friday, April 15, 2016</i>	<i>8:00 a.m.</i>
<i>BEEP (School Committee Room)</i>	<i>Tuesday, April 26, 2016</i>	<i>6:30 p.m.</i>
<i>Lawrence School</i>	<i>Thursday, April 28, 2016</i>	<i>8:00 a.m.</i>
<i>Pierce School</i>	<i>Tuesday, May 3, 2016</i>	<i>8:00 a.m.</i>
<i>Lincoln School</i>	<i>Friday, May 6, 2016</i>	<i>8:00 a.m.</i>
<i>METCO (Boston location TDB)</i>	<i>Wednesday, May 11, 2016</i>	<i>6:30 p.m.</i>
<i>SEPAC</i>	<i>Friday, May 20, 2016</i>	<i>8:30 a.m.</i>

**2. Lincoln School Principal and Deputy Superintendent Searches update.**

*Enclosed you will find the list of search committee members and the search process and timeline being used for the above searches. The Lincoln School Principal search is already underway. The 12 member search committee has met to review the process and begin the process of generating interview questions. Each search committee member received the application packets for the 47 principal candidates on Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. On Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup> this search committee will meet to select candidates to be interviewed and to finalize interview questions. It is anticipated interviews at Lincoln*

*School will be scheduled during the weeks of April 25<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>. This schedule will allow finalists to be selected and receive 2<sup>nd</sup> interviews during the weeks of May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 16<sup>th</sup>. It is hoped a preferred candidate can be announced at the May 19<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting. Search timeline for the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning is scheduled to be completed by May 31<sup>st</sup> and Deputy Superintendent for Student Services to be completed by June 16<sup>th</sup>.*

**3. First Class Transition to Google.Doc**

*As you know, all of our staff and faculty (as well the entire School Committee) experienced a serious disruption when First Class crashed on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Working together, the Town IT department and the Help Desk have restored accounts so almost all users have access to their emails from January 1, 2016 until March 1. Many users still don't have access to emails from before 2016. Personal calendars have been restored also, but group calendars have not been completely fixed. While no data has been lost, it is not all accessible to users at this point. More importantly, the crash made clear to our IT department that First Class is both less stable than it ever has been, and that we cannot rely on the company to give us accurate or timely information on the cause of outages or how to fix them.*

*As a result, and after checking with principals, coordinators, and Senior Staff we have decided to migrate from First Class to Google for our primary communications needs. This change will complete the process begun two years ago when the Town and School Department first considered switching email providers. At that point, the Town switched to Microsoft Outlook while the schools began to make a shift by using Google through our PSBMA.org accounts. Currently, more than 1,000 staff members are actively using their Google accounts for file sharing and shared calendars.*

*The Conference and the file sharing are two of the most important functions of First Class that will also transfer to Google. Google Groups and Google Drive will replace these functions. For the First Class Conferences, we are now identifying all the conferences that are most used and will create Google Groups for each one of them before we launch. While many employees are familiar with Google, significant support will still be necessary to ease the transition. This support will include a combination of written documentation and how-to guides, video support, and optional classes offered after school and during the summer.*

*The current state of First Class is forcing us to make this change as quickly as possible while still allowing us to create a reasonable roll-out plan and the necessary user-support. Presently we are aiming to launch in early June or immediately after the end of school. We still need to confer with more staff to get input on which option is less disruptive. Ben Lummis, Scott Moore, and the Town's CIO, Kevin Stokes are working together to execute the transition to Gmail and Google. Please note that First Class is fragile enough that there is a possibility that it could have another break down. If this does happen it could precipitate an immediate switch to Gmail.*



**4. Massachusetts Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA) and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences donate \$1,000 to the Public Schools of Brookline**

*I am pleased to report the Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) recently received a \$1,000 donation from the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA) and the Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences in appreciation for the PSB hosting a team of Kuwait School administrators earlier this year. The day long visit in Brookline involved meeting with the Central Office senior staff to start their day followed by lengthy visits to the Driscoll and Lawrence Schools. I request the School Committee accept this donation and approve it being shared by the Driscoll and Lawrence Schools for school betterment purposes. Rick Rogers has indicated the \$500 going to Lawrence School will be used to purchase books to bolster their library collection of books in other languages, including Arabic, Chinese and Portuguese. Eileen Woods has indicated the Driscoll School will use their \$500 to purchase books in the native languages of Middle Eastern students at Driscoll.*

**5. The Sagamore Receives Gold Crown National Recognition**

*Mary Burchenal has informed me for the first time ever, The Sagamore, BHS student newspaper, has won a Gold Crown from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. In the past, the Sagamore has been awarded Silver recognition, but never Gold. Only 19 schools in the country earned this award, and BHS's Sagamore was the only school in New England. Congratulations to the Co-Editors in Chief, Izzy Meyers, Rosa Stern Pait and Sofia Tong, and to Advisors, Lindsay Wise and Marcella Anderson.*

**6. Office of Student Services "DisAbility Alliance" ~ Inaugural Event April 13, 2016  
Voices and Narratives of Ability with Loretta Claiborne**

*Loretta is a Special Olympics athlete and disability advocate. She transcended both sight and intellectual challenges to become a renowned athlete and disability advocate across the globe. She is the recipient of the ESPY Arthur Ashe Award for Courage and has been among the top 100 women in the Boston Marathon three times. Loretta shared her inspirational story of courage and transformation with students, parents and teachers.*

**7. Official Last Day of School – Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup>.**

*Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup> will be the official last day of school in school year 2015-2016. High School graduation will be held on Sunday, June 5, 2016. Grade 8 graduation ceremonies will be held on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup>.*

<b><u>SCHOOL</u></b>	<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TIME</u></b>	<b><u>LOCATION</u></b>
Baker	Wednesday, June 15	4:00 p.m.	Newbury Aud. at Baker
Devotion	Wednesday, June 15	5:00 p.m.	Coolidge Corner Theater
Driscoll	Wednesday, June 15	5:00 p.m.	Driscoll School Auditorium
Heath	Wednesday, June 15	4:00 p.m.	Little Field Park at Heath
Lawrence	Wednesday, June 15	6:00 p.m.	Lawrence School Auditorium
Lincoln	Thursday, June 16	4:00 p.m.	Lincoln School Theater

<i>Pierce</i>	<i>Wednesday, June 15</i>	<i>4:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Pierce School Amphitheater</i>
<i>Runkle</i>	<i>Wednesday, June 15</i>	<i>4:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Runkle School Amphitheater</i>

**8. Status of Grade 8 Field Trips**

*Currently, the five schools that historically plan overnight field trips at this time of year have modified their plans in the following ways: Runkle and Lincoln Schools have shortened their trip to New York City from 2 days to 1 day. The school administration and parent chaperones will attend the trip. Lawrence and Baker Schools have modified their overnight trip to New York City to an extended day trip. Students will depart at 6:00 a.m. and return at 11:00 p.m. that evening. They have been able to get tickets to a Broadway show matinee. Pierce School has cancelled their annual overnight white water rafting trip, but will treat the Grade 8 students to a day at Canobie Lake and possibly a second special day trip. Driscoll School Grade 8 field trip to Farm School in Athol, Massachusetts is still planned to take place. The school administration will provide overnight supervision and the teachers will attend during the day.*

**9. 16-17 Kindergarten Enrollment Update**

*Please see the attached breakdown of anticipated enrollments for the Class of 2029.*

**10. April Progress Report on 2015-2016 District-wide Priorities**

*In November 2015, Senior Staff identified and presented to the School Committee the District-wide Priorities for the 2015-2016 school year. Enclosed you will find the original list of these priorities and our April Progress Report that details the work completed to date on these priorities. The Report includes a listing of artifacts and evidence for each priority. To save money, paper, and time we have decided not to duplicate all of these artifacts for every member of the Committee. Instead these documentations are available in the Superintendent's office for your review at any time.*

**11. Brookline High School – Updates**  
**Student Walk-Out**

*On Wednesday, April 13 at about 10:30 a.m., a group of Brookline High School (BHS) students walked to Town Hall to demonstrate their concern over the High School's lack of response to the many racial issues that have taken place at BHS this year. The students were assembled in a circle at the entrance of the Town Hall when I invited them to meet with me in the School Committee Room. About seven students met with me, Jennifer Fischer-Mueller, Karen Shmukler, and Ben Lummis. We had a productive conversation which resulted in, among other things, an invitation to the students to be involved in the planning process for the November 8<sup>th</sup> Racial Awareness Training / Professional Development Day for all staff.*

**BHS Bomb Threats – Monday, April 11 and Thursday, April 14, 2016**

*On Monday and Thursday mornings at approximately 8:00 a.m., BHS received telephone bomb threats. It has been confirmed by the Brookline Police Department that both telephone bomb threats were connected to 20+ robocall bomb threats received by*

*over 20 Massachusetts school on both days. On each day, the police and fire departments were immediately notified and assisted us with an assessment of the entire school building. On Monday, a backpack was discovered during this building assessment procedure that required further investigation. This required the involvement of the State Police Bomb Investigation Unit which extended the evacuation status. Once the entire building was declared safe, the students and staff were allowed to return to their classrooms. Approximate time lost was about 2 hours. On Thursday, we immediately evacuated the building before classes began. This avoided students bringing their book bags and backpacks into the school which helped to simplify the building assessment (search process). The entire building was inspected and declared safe by 8:35 a.m. The students and staff entered the building and reported to their first period class by 8:40 a.m. A debriefing session involving police, fire and school officials occurred on both days following each evacuation incident. We were able to jointly discuss what had occurred and how the evacuation was conducted with the primary purpose being to identify ways we could improve this emergency procedure. Several very positive suggestions were generated each day, some of which were implemented on Thursday, April 14.*

Ms. Ditkoff requested a summary of the racial incidents at BHS over the past year and the subsequent actions. It would be helpful to pull together this information as well as other reports related to race and equity, e.g., the recent report on the achievement gap and the summary of budget initiatives related to promoting equity. Dr. Connelly reported that Ms. Holman and Mr. Lummis are working on this and hope to present it an upcoming School Committee meeting. Ms. Ditkoff suggested inviting the Police Chief.

Ms. Ditkoff noted that the Greater Boston Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer People will honor Student Representative Ethan Kahn with the 2016 Elsie Frank Scholarship Award at Greater Boston PFLAG's Pride and Passion Benefit and Auction on May 6, 2016 at the Boston Marriott Copley Place. The School Committee members congratulated Mr. Kahn for this achievement.

## **7. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OF CURRENT ISSUES**

### **a. Progress Report on Priority Goals for 2015-2016 School Year**

Dr. Connelly, Dr. Fischer-Mueller, Dr. Shmukler, Ms. Dunn and Mr. Lummis presented a progress report on Priority Goals for the 2015-2016 School Year (Attachment K). They noted the accomplishments, evidence/artifacts, and next steps. Accomplishments are summarized below.

#### **1) Educational Equity**

- a) Create a Comprehensive long-term plan to address education equity – Completed an inventory of school-based practices; Created a framework for system planning.
- b) Address the disproportionate referral and representation of children from diverse racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds in Special Education – Identified and implemented practices and accountability systems to ensure that diverse learners with diverse educational experience and opportunities are not systematically referred to special

education; Planned and implemented a series of ongoing professional development activities related to issues that drive disproportionality.

2) Strategic Planning – Strategic Plan framework completed; Development of the Strategic Plan is underway; Have received input on Strategic Priorities from faculties of Baker, Driscoll, Heath, Upper Devotion as well as the Lawrence Faculty Planning Team, Brookline High School (BHS) Coordinators, BHS Faculty Council, and BHS Student Council; Timeline has been revised based on need for teacher/faculty input on Strategic Priorities (now scheduled to be completed in fall 2016); Have executed better processes for rolling out and communicating key initiatives including Progress Reports, World Language Selection, ACCESS testing, Structured English Immersion (SEI)/Rethinking Equity in the Teaching of English (RETELL) training, and Staff Climate Surveys.

Operations and Capital Planning – Director of Operations on board February 2016; Revision to Capital Planning process for Schools; Integrated and updated enrollment forecast model in preparation for 9<sup>th</sup> school; Secured secondary location for Devotion K-4 resulting in single phase project; Established cross-departmental staff working group for 9<sup>th</sup> school; Established staff working group for BHS Expansion project and re-engaged SMMA to complete visioning report.

3) Communications – Improved internal and external communications related to specific events and initiatives (e.g., Superintendent Search, principal searches, 9<sup>th</sup> School Site Selection, First Class, Progress Reports, World Language selection, etc.); One-third of PK-8 schools have transitioned to new website platform.

4) Organizational Leadership

a) Support and Evaluate Principals and Support New Unit B and Non-Aligned Administrators – Created mentor partnerships; Created administrator orientation proposal; Partnered with Ribas Associates for evaluation professional development; Partnered with Harvard Graduate School of Education for Vice Principals.

b) Build a Professional Culture – Leadership Team Meetings now include joint discussion and decision-making (e.g., Strategic Planning, support needed from Central Office, 2015-2016 District Priorities, emergency procedures, and educational equity); Curriculum Coordinator and Program Coordinator (CC/PC) meetings and joint CC/PC and preK-8 Principals include ongoing presentations of issues by Coordinators and Principals for collaborative problem-solving and discussion.

c) Develop Professional Management Practices – Budget Timeline and needs for budget development clarified for future years; Budget document narrative is organized by School Department operational structure and provides for greater transparency as to the goals and mission of programs and initiatives undertaken; Budget document will become a living policy document that can measure progress; Policies are drafted and ready for review for Meal Charge Policy, Finance Assistance, and Student Fees, Fines, and Charges.

Ms. Ditkoff requested 1) a presentation on special education (e.g., goals, strategies, programs, budget, and legal pieces) before the end of the year; 2) a sense of where we hope to be in mid-June on transitional planning and onboarding plans; and 3) a summary of where we are on the equity pieces.

**b. Report on March 22, 2016 School Committee Workshop**

Ms. Ditkoff provided a report on the March 22, 2016 School Committee Workshop, which was facilitated by Cynthia Silva Parker of Interaction Institute for Social Change. The purpose of the workshop was to build a common understanding among school leaders of key concepts related to racial equity, in order to inform later discussions and deliberations about educational equity within the district. Participants gained a shared understanding of key concepts, including race, racism, racial justice, racial equity, unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, and privilege and an initial understanding of the relevance of these concepts for a school district.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Ditkoff adjourned the meeting at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin E. Coyne, Executive Assistant  
Brookline School Committee